

**Town of Rowe**  
Board of Selectmen – Minutes  
Thursday, September 19, 2019 – 6:30 pm  
Rowe Town Hall - Hearing Room 1

---

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Chuck Sokol at 6:32 p.m.

**Announcement of recording devices:** two recording devices

**Present:** Chair Chuck Sokol, Ed Silva, Selectman

**Absent:** Vice-Chair Jennifer Morse

Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau

**Audience:** Treasurer Joanne Semanie, Finance Committee Members: Loretta Dionne, C. Selmi Hyytinen, Paul McLatchy III and Chair Wayne Zavotka, School Committee Chair Susan Zavotka and Member Matt Crowningshield, Superintendent John Franzoni

**Noteworthy Announcements:** None

**Audience of Citizens:** None

**Scheduled Presentations/Joint Meetings:**

**A. 6:30pm - Finance Committee: Budget Season Schedule:**

- Chair Wayne Zavotka presented the Budget Calendar Presented for Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21). He further encouraged members to bring as much information as possible to the 'Financial Roundtable' meeting set for October 24, 2019 at 6:30 pm. The Informational Session with Boards, Committees and Dept. Heads will take place on October 28, 2019 to discuss the budget process.
- Budget Submissions: The format for the budget presentations was discussed and it was agreed to use the same format as last year and request each department use the provided format for uniformity and supply any additional information in the method they choose.
- Stipend Policy: Chair Zavotka presented a response from the State Ethics Commission regarding participation in discussion regarding stipends should a family member have a financial interest. He said the Finance Committee was unable create a stipend policy due to having only one member free of financial interest. The formation of a special committee was discussed.
- CIRRP Plan: The Finance Committee presented a draft Capital Improvement, Repair and Replacement Plan (CIRRP) definition to expand the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to include improvement, repair and replacement to expand the scope of work and a timeline with an emergency exemption. A goal was for completion of the plan was next Town Meeting for a ten-year CIRRP Plan. Further discussion would take place at the Financial Roundtable.

Finance Committee left the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

**Contracts:**

**1. Broadband Borrowing Documents:**

**Motion to Sign Loan: Chair Sokol made a motion to sign the loan for the amount of \$200,000.00 Anticipation Serial Loan through Unibank as part of the broadband borrowing. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was accepted. (vote: 2/0/0)**

**B. 7:00pm - School Committee: OBRA, Oil Tank, Facilities Manager**

- Oil Tank for Generator: Chair Susan Zavotka discussed the generator at the school that was designated for town use as the emergency shelter location. She explained that the heating units for the school run with propane fuel. In an emergency, the generator has the capacity to run the cafeteria, gym and offices, however, do not power the heat pumps for classroom end of the building. Chair Zavotka discussed the need to clarify who is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the generator since it was in place for powering in an emergency. There was discussion about formulating a plan with Emergency Management Director (EMD) and possibly meet with the former EMD Ed May. A facilities person for the maintenance of the school was discussed and that it might be a good plan to share with the four towns in the district to handle these types of issues and to help the school with projects. There was discussion about considering it for the future.
- Oil Tank for Generator: Chair Zavotka said that Fire Chief recommended removal of the oil tank from the ground as it could be a potential hazardous waste situation and putting it on a capital plan was discussed.
- OBRA: Superintendent John Franzoni said that the North Berkshire School Union employees who were ineligible for retirement benefits contributed to an OBRA or deferred compensation plan rather than Social Security accounts. Superintendent Franzoni requested that Rowe take steps to rectify the situation to make it consistent with shared employees and it should have been taken care of at the time that Rowe joined the district. The part-time employees under 20 hours could save the town \$18,000.00 by offering an OBRA plan versus staying with Social Security contributions.

**Motion to Offer OBRA Plans: Chair Sokol made a motion that the Town of Rowe switch to OBRA benefits from Social Security contributions as of January 1, 2020 for all part-time and stipended employees not eligible for a retirement or pension type plan. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was accepted. (vote: 2/0/0)**

- End of Year Report: Superintendent Franzoni requested that Treasurer provide figures for an End of Year Report needed to complete the report. Chair Sokol agreed to follow up with Treasurer.
- Capital Improvement Plans: There was discussion about how to use school choice monies. Chair Sokol said he would like to see the use of monies be used to help mitigate year to year fluctuations. Chair Zavotka said there would be 5 capital improvement plan items coming up in the future.

School Committee Members and Superintendent John Franzoni left at 8:05p.m.

**C. 7:30pm - Maggie Rice, BoH Chair: Emergency Management Plan, Update on 77 Hazelton Rd.:**

- Board of Health Chair Maggie Rice discussed the Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) outbreak and discussed Rowe was determined to be in a moderate risk area. Chair Rice said the issue is that

when the notification was sent out from the state there were no town officials available and no emergency management plan in place. She commended Board of Health Clerk and Town Nurse were great at making necessary notifications. Chair Rice asked that Rowe join the Mosquito Control District to help with preventing an outbreak which would cost \$5,000.00 to join and before the Spring. She said they would put traps out in high risk areas. It was decided to speak with the Road crew and Park Manager to protect themselves and asked Town Nurse to further educate the public in the Goal Post. In addition, she spoke about the increase of ticks in the area.

- Emergency Management Plan: Chair Rice said she had come in two years ago asking for an Emergency Management Plan update and nothing has been done and feels it is critical.
- Update on 77 Hazelton Road: . Chair Rice updated on the cleanup on 77 Hazelton Road that was ordered by the Board and said that significant progress was made. The resident was not in compliance by the August 31, 2019 deadline, however, due to the significant progress made, a letter was sent to him extending the cleanup to September 30, 2019. The resident will be fined if not in compliance to their orders by the time of their visit on October 4, 2019. Chair Rice said she was encouraged that he would be in compliance by next visit.

Chair Rice left the meeting at 8:26 pm

**D. 8:00pm – Fire Dept. Follow up on FC PublicRadio System Meeting**: Tabled until next meeting

**Correspondence/Citizen Comments as received**: Reviewed, no action required

**Municipal Light Plant Broadband Project Updates and Discussion**: No Updates

**Liaison Reports (DPW, Fire, Police, Town Hall)**

- Highway Dept.: Selectman reported that road line painting company keeps putting off the painting and he is continuing to follow up with it. He discussed the Davis Mine/Davenport road report and said the maintenance for those roads needs to be kept up and plans to work with Superintendent to put the roads on a schedule.
- Fire Dept. Liaison Vice-Chair Morse: Vice-Chair Morse sent a message saying the Fire Dept. would like to speak about the station security, a new generator, view the new fire truck and follow up about the Franklin County Public Radio System at the next meeting. She also said the Emergency Action Plan for the town dams could be finalized at that time and discuss the next steps with Fire Shared Services.

**Old Business**

1. Continued discussion:

- a) Accountant Hiring: The meeting of September 13, 2019 was discussed and that David Fierro of Hill-town Municipal Accounting Services, LLC. was appointed as Interim Accountant as a vendor and that the transfer of funds from the Accountant wages budget line to Accountant Operations would require a Special Town Meeting vote. Executive Secretary reported discussing employment options and that it was confirmed that he could continue using the current accounting software indefinitely. It was agreed to continue to look into grant funding for the Vadar software used by many towns.

- b) Treasurer Hiring and Job Description: Chair Sokol reported speaking with Tax Collector about combining the Treasurer position with Tax Collector in the future and she was supportive. It was decided to begin interviewing for the Treasurer position at the next meeting following advertising for the position. There was discussion about combining the positions of Treasurer and Tax Collector and that it would require a bylaw change.
- c) Davis Mine & Davenport Maintenance: Following discussion, it was decided to make a tentative date of October 17<sup>th</sup> to meet with the residents from Davis Mine and Davenport Roads to discuss the Gill Engineering Assessment Report of the roads.
- d) FY2021 Budget: Discussed earlier in the meeting
- e) School Employee Retirement Deductions: Discussed earlier in the meeting
- f) Employee Handbook and Policies Revisions: Item tabled
- g) Employee Evaluation Procedures and Timelines: Item tabled
- h) Comp Time Policy: Selectman Silva requested that Superintendent Larned have an updated hire letter. It was agreed to work with Town Counsel on the matter.
- i) Employee Complaint Procedure: Item tabled
- j) Cannabis Cultivation Facility: Item tabled
- k) E-Mail Policies, Data Policy, Contracted IT services, E-Mail Migration: Item tabled
- l) Open Space Committee: Admin Assistant reported the committee had not yet met.
- m) Emergency Action Plan for Mill Pond Dam and Pelham Lake Dam and Dam Signage: It would be discussed at next meeting.
- n) Bylaw Committee Recommendations: Town Clerk sent the non-substantive section of the Bylaws to the Selectmen for review.

**Motion to Approve : Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the changes made to the non-substantive portion of the Town General Bylaws. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva was accepted. (vote: 2/0/0)**

- o) Town Administrator: Item tabled
- p) Beautification of the Broadband Hut: A quote for the landscaping to the hut grounds was reviewed and there was discussion about the cost of paving. Selectman Silva will send the quote to MLP Manager for review and continue to try to obtain quotes for the construction work.
- q) Situational Awareness Training: No date set yet.
- r) Summer Youth Programs Structure: Chair Sokol said he would contact Park Manager to set up a time to come in to speak.

#### **Contracts:**

2. Council on Aging:

Motion to Sign FY2020- Grant/Allocation: Chair Sokol made a motion to sign the FY2020- Grant/Allocation – Statement of Authorization for the Council on Aging. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva was accepted. (vote: 2-0-0)

2.) Follow-up on action items

1. Administrative Staff items and additional town hall updates: Discussed earlier in the meeting
2. Chuck Sokol items: Discussed earlier in the meeting
3. Jenn Morse items: Discussed earlier in the meeting
4. Ed Silva items: Discussed earlier in the meeting

**Selectboard Business**

**New Business**

1. Property Tax Billing Schedule: Chair Sokol said a discussion with the Board of Assessors would be required.
2. Underground Oil Tank at School: Discussed earlier in the meeting.

**Meeting Minutes**

A. 9/5/2019:

Motion to Accept Minutes: Following review, Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the Minutes of September 5, 2019 as written. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was accepted. (Vote: 2-0-0)

**WARRANTS:**

Chair Sokol reported FY20 W07 and Payroll FY20 W06 were reviewed and signed.

**Adjournment:**


Seeing no further business, Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at 9:17p.m. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was accepted. (vote: 2-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: 10-3-19

Approved:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chuck Sokol, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Selectman Jennifer Morse, Vice-Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Selectman Ed Silva

**Documents:**

- . Agenda 9/19/19
- . Action Items from 8/22/19
- . DRAFT Minutes 09/05/19
- . Executive Secretary Updates
- . FY2020 COA Grant Allocation- Statement of Authorization
- . Danek Excavating Quote for hut
- . Town of Rowe General Bylaws Revision 2019
- . FY2021 Rowe Budget Calendar
- . Letter to Town Counsel
- . Email State Ethics Commission re: Finance Committee stipends
- . Email Finance Committee to BoS re: CIP definition
- .

**Mail:**

- Adam Hinds Email re: Revenue Calculations
- CSA Quarterly Meeting Notice
- Western Mass Municipal Conference Flyer
- DLS Budget & Tax Recap Workshop